

REVISION OF THE VERSAILLES TREATY

by

MILDRED S. WERTHEIMER

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INTRODUCTION

DURING the early part of the present month preparations were reported to be under way in every important city in Germany for a series of large-scale demonstrations on June 28 (the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Versailles) to take the form of a vigorous nation-wide protest against the terms of that historic document. A sudden damper was placed upon the activities of would-be demonstrators, however, when the Socialist party, now in power in Germany, announced that it would boycott the proposed demonstrations. Its refusal to participate in the ceremonies planned by Nationalist elements was explained on the ground that they had as their object the "inflaming of nationalistic passions."

But while the government of the day has frowned upon any attempt to stage a spectacular protest against the Versailles Treaty ten years after its formal conclusion, nothing is plainer than the fact than the Socialists do desire for Germany those practical advantages which revision of the Versailles Treaty is presumed to entail. Socialist leaders took the pains to point out that their boycott of the proposed demonstrations could not be construed as an indication that they did not desire revision of the treaty. The opposite was, in fact, the case. "The Socialist party," they asserted, "for ten years has done everything to mitigate the injustice of the Versailles Treaty, to alleviate its burdens and to tear down the false judgment of the German people which was formed in the public opinion of the world during the war."¹

A passage of this sort appearing at the present moment in the German press suggests the desirability of attempting to discover just what Germans have been saying and thinking about treaty revision, and what are the chief arguments that have been advanced by advocates of revision. The present report reviews the considerations that have entered into the most important discussions of the subject. It begins with an examination of Article XIX of the Covenant of the League of Nations providing for revision of the peace treaties. It then proceeds to discuss the reasons for the inclusion of such an article in the League Covenant and to consider the conditions requisite for its practical application in world affairs.

As Article XIX of the Covenant gives Germans the legal right to press for revision of the Versailles Treaty, certain other considerations, they have felt, give them the moral right to do so. The second part of the present study is devoted to a review of these special considerations, which are treated not only in the light of their historical background but also in their relation to the views held by Germany's neighbors and by various political groups within Germany itself.

The final section—that dealing with problems growing out of the demilitarization of Germany's eastern frontiers—raises the whole question of the League's responsibility with respect to the treatment of minority populations. The present report gives only a bare indication of the importance attached to this question in League circles. Adequate treatment of the subject in its various phases is reserved until such time as the League shall have decided what its attitude is to be.

1. New York *Herald Tribune*, June 9, 1929.

TREATY REVISION AND PROPAGANDA

NOW that ten years have passed since the conclusion of the Treaty of Versailles, embodying the terms upon which the Allied and Associated Powers were willing to make peace with Germany, the question may well be asked as to how far German public opinion has adjusted itself to the settlement which was forced upon the nation in 1919 in consequence of its military defeat in the preceding year.

Indications have been frequently given in the German press and at international gatherings of one sort or another that the adjustment is far from complete—that although the German Government has declared its policy to be one of “fulfillment” of the Treaty of Versailles, dissatisfaction with the terms of the peace settlement is general, and the desire for its revision strong. Examination of the policies of the important political parties of the German Reich shows, indeed, that all of them without exception advocate either immediate or eventual revision of the treaty.

One of the most recent of many incidents exemplifying the German desire for revision occurred on April 18, during the conference of reparation experts at Paris, when Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, head of the German delegation, presented a memorandum referring to the territorial provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, and suggesting their alteration as a necessary part of a satisfactory reparation agreement.

Dr. Schacht stated that it was absolutely necessary to “fortify the basis of Germany’s economic life” if the country’s efforts to meet reparation payments were to be made efficacious. What he meant by “fortifying the basis of Germany’s economic life” was made clear when he referred to the fact that as a result of the war Germany had been deprived of the possibility of developing overseas reservoirs of raw materials, while its domestic supply of raw materials had also been reduced. To meet the proposed reparation payments without increasing its foreign debts, he stated, Germany must be in a position to create for itself a means of

procuring raw materials from overseas, developing these new sources of supply with German capital and on German responsibility. This was all the more necessary because the loss of territory along Germany’s eastern border had meant relinquishment of a region which produces an agricultural surplus. A further loss to Germany was involved in the geographical separation from it of an entire province (presumably East Prussia)—a circumstance which had caused the prosperity of that province to decline and had obliged the Reich to grant it regular subsidies. Dr. Schacht concluded this section of his memorandum by saying that since these losses reduced Germany’s capacity to pay, it would be necessary to take measures for the readjustment of the unfavorable conditions to which it had drawn attention, if the reparation problem was to be dealt with adequately.^{1a}

FRENCH CHARGE
“GERMAN PROPAGANDA”

The inclusion of this suggestion in the Schacht memorandum caused a ripple of surprise, but only because it injected into a conference on financial affairs questions of a political nature with which the reparation experts had no authority to deal.² But in the German point of view itself there was nothing startling. The French had for some time been accusing the German Government of working actively toward creating a public opinion favorable to revision of the peace settlement and of going to the length of carrying on well financed propaganda abroad toward this end. Premier Poincaré, for example, during the course of a debate on Alsace-Lorraine in the French Chamber of Deputies, charged on February 1, 1929 that the German budget had provided 94 million marks for propaganda purposes, and that this money was used to extend “Germanism” (*das Deutschtum*) outside of Germany in the interests of Pan-Germanism.

1a. For the most complete English text of the Schacht memorandum yet received, cf. *New York Herald Tribune*, April 22, 1929.

2. The German delegation did not press acceptance of this memorandum in subsequent meetings of the reparation experts.

STRESEMANN'S REPLY

Foreign Minister Stresemann's answer to this charge was given out to the press promptly on the following day in a statement specifying the uses to which the German Government had actually been putting the funds available for propaganda purposes. He said that the entire appropriation for propaganda amounted to only 21,638,000 marks, and that only a small part of this sum was for use outside the Reich. The Ministry of the Occupied Territories, for example, had four million marks, of which three million were set aside for cultural purposes; this could scarcely be classified with funds used for propaganda abroad. The German Ministry of the Interior, moreover, had two million marks for the support of cultural activities. The offices of the Reich (*Reichskanzlei*) had 300,000 marks at their disposal and the central home service

(*Reichszentrale fur Heimatsdienst*) 522,000 marks. The Foreign Office had been allotted a secret fund of six million marks, another fund of six million marks for the advancement of humanitarian and cultural relations with foreign countries (4,500,000 of which were set aside for use in schools) and 416,000 marks for dissemination of information within Germany. In addition the Foreign Office had a sum of 2,400,000 marks for the dissemination abroad of information about Germany. The schools of which he had spoken could not be classified, he said, as propaganda agencies.³

The significance of this exchange of courtesies between Premier Poincaré and Dr. Stresemann is to be found in the mental attitudes it exemplifies—a certain mistrust on the part of France, and a matter-of-course interest on the part of the Reich in Germans living beyond the frontiers of Germany.

LEAGUE PROVISION FOR TREATY REVISION

It is the common belief of Germans that their nation has both a legal and an ethical right to demand revision of the Treaty of Versailles. The claim to legal right is based upon Article XIX of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which makes the following significant provision:

"The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world."

How this article came to be included in the Covenant is a matter worth considering at this point, since it throws a certain light on the purposes which the framers of the Covenant had in mind when they decided to endorse the principle of treaty revision.

PRESIDENT WILSON AND TREATY REVISION

It is apparent that President Wilson recognized very early that provision ought to be made for revision of the peace treaties. Statements made by him on board the *George*

Washington to members of the Colonel House Commission of Inquiry indicated as much. Dr. Isaiah Bowman, in his informal minutes of a meeting held on December 10, 1918, represented the gist of President Wilson's remarks on this subject to the American experts bound for the Peace Conference to be as follows:

"As for the League of Nations, it implied political independence and territorial integrity plus later alteration of terms and alteration of boundaries if it could be shown that injustice had been done or that conditions had changed. And such alteration would be considerably easier to make in time as passion subsided and matters could be viewed in the light of justice rather than in the light of a peace conference at the close of a protracted war."⁴

During the early part of the Peace Conference, before meetings were actually held by the newly appointed Commission on the League of Nations, tentative drafts were made of a covenant for the League of Nations. President Wilson, as was to be expected in view of his statements on board

³. *Frankfurter Zeitung (Erstes Morgenblatt)*, February 3, 1929; *Le Temps*, February 3, 1929.

⁴. Quoted in Miller, D. H., *The Drafting of the Covenant*, Vol. I, p. 42.

the *George Washington*, included in his Third Draft⁵ an article providing for revision of territorial sections of the peace treaties. A British draft, prepared by Lord Robert Cecil at about the same time, went further than that of President Wilson in providing means not only for revision of boundaries but also for drastic treatment of parties unwilling to recognize the validity of such revision.

To these proposals American advisers, and notably Mr. David Hunter Miller, took exception. Mr. Miller asserted that such provisions would merely serve to make dissatisfaction with national boundaries permanent and "legalize irredentist agitation." When the British and American drafts were put together to form what is known as the Hurst-Miller draft of the Covenant, provisions for boundary revision were accordingly omitted, although guarantees for preservation of the territorial integrity of States Members of the League were retained.

TREATY REVISION AND SECURITY

When the League of Nations Commission appointed by the Peace Conference actually entered upon its duties, however, it dealt with the two questions of territorial guarantees and possible revision of the treaties together, since it was recognized that the subjects were to a certain degree related. Although British representatives were especially opposed to the guarantee provisions, the commission finally adopted them in the form which they have assumed in what is now the famous Article X of the League Covenant.⁶ The commission's decision with respect to the second question was embodied in Article XIX, already quoted, which empowered the Assembly of the League to advise revision of any treaties which had become inapplicable.⁷

It was Lord Robert Cecil who suggested, in the course of the commission's discussions

5. A document known also as President Wilson's Second Paris Draft.

6. "The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled."

7. Miller, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 169; Vol. II, p. 550.

of Article X, the principle which thus finds expression in Article XIX. The actual text of the article, however, was proposed by President Wilson. Lord Robert Cecil wished to go still further, and attempted to modify Article X by the addition of a phrase providing that the High Contracting Parties should undertake "*subject to the provisions of Article XXIV* [now XIX] to respect . . . the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League." Such an amendment, he thought, would not alter the meaning of Article X or serve to weaken it. But President Wilson did not share Lord Robert Cecil's view. He believed that the additional phrase might detract from the force of the guarantees. It was the article on which the French relied for security, he said, and he did not see, therefore, how it was possible to permit it to be weakened in any way. Lord Robert Cecil's amendment was not adopted and Article X as it stands today accordingly provides for guarantees but makes no additional reference to the possibility of treaty revision provided for in Article XIX.

On the day when it was decided to incorporate the League Covenant in the treaties of peace, President Wilson said in part:

"I can easily conceive that many of these settlements will need subsequent reconsideration; that many of the decisions we shall make will need subsequent alterations in some degree."

President Wilson's brief pronouncement on the subject at the plenary session of the Peace Conference on January 25, 1919 was to find echoes in a later declaration of the Allied and Associated Powers as a whole. In the reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to the *Observations of the German Delegation on the Conditions of Peace* occurred a passage paralleling the statement of President Wilson:

"They [the Allied and Associated Powers] believe that it is not only a just settlement of the Great War, but that it provides the basis upon which the peoples of Europe can live together in friendship and equality. At the same time it creates the machinery for the peaceful adjustment of all international problems by discussion and consent, whereby the settlement of 1919 itself can be modified from time to time to suit new facts and conditions as they arise."

What one of the leading American advisers at the Peace Conference thinks of the importance of Article XIX, looking at it nine years after the drafting of the Covenant, is apparent from the following extract from the recent work of Mr. David Hunter Miller:

"It is coming and has partly come to be seen that peace means a situation in which neither the guarantees of Article X nor the sanctions of Article XVI are called into execution and so means a situation which depends on the conference table agreements of Articles XI and XIX with those other articles in the background. . . . The security of Articles XI and XIX is the security of arbitration and of freedom from attack, while the security of Articles X and XVI is the security of compulsion and of reparation."⁸

APPLICATION OF ARTICLE XIX

Article XIX of the League Covenant seems to have been invoked only twice as yet by States desiring revision of treaties to which they are parties. In 1920 Peru asked the Assembly "to reconsider and revise" the treaty of October 20, 1883 between Peru and Chile. The request was withdrawn by Peru on December 2, 1920, the Peruvian Government "reserving the right to submit its difference with Chile to the League at a later date."⁹ In 1920, also, the Bolivian Government addressed a request to the First Assembly of the League, "with a view to obtaining from the League of Nations the revision of the Treaty of Peace signed between Bolivia and Chile on October 20, 1904." This treaty had deprived Bolivia of territory which had given it access to the sea and it was because Bolivians believed the arrangement to be unjust that their government appealed to the League. The First Assembly postponed consideration of the question and the Second Assembly, in 1921, referred the matter to a Committee of Jurists, asking the latter's opinion as to the competence of the Assembly under Article XIX with regard to the dispute.¹⁰

The committee's opinion was as follows: "In its present form, the request of Bolivia

is not in order, because the Assembly of the League of Nations cannot of itself modify any treaty, the modification of treaties lying solely within the competence of the contracting States." It went on to say that since the Covenant confers on the Assembly the power to "advise" as to the reconsideration by Members of their treaties, such advice "can only be given in cases where treaties have become inapplicable . . . that is to say when the state of affairs existing at the moment of their conclusion has subsequently undergone, either materially or morally, such radical changes that their application has ceased to be reasonably possible, or in cases of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world."

Thus Bolivia's request was rejected on the technical ground that it was not correctly drawn up. The opinion of the Committee of Jurists is important because it may form a precedent for any future action which the League may take under Article XIX of the Covenant, preventing the League from advising reconsideration of treaties when only one of the parties concerned feels that the terms have been unjust from the beginning. Nevertheless, Article XIX says further that the Assembly may "advise" consideration of "international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world." And another article of the Covenant—viz., Article XI, already referred to—states that "any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations." And it is important to note that Article XI is not restricted by the interpretation which has imposed limits to the meaning of Article XIX.

Since under Article XIX it is merely the duty of the Assembly to "advise" in matters of this nature, some authorities hold that the action of the Assembly on such occasions may be decided by majority vote. This being the case, they point out that interested parties would be unable to block action in the Assembly. Were the contrary to be true,

8. Miller, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 551.

9. League of Nations, *Records of the First Assembly, Plenary Meetings*, p. 580, 596.

10. League of Nations, *Records of the First Assembly, Plenary Meetings*, p. 580, 595; *Records of the Second Assembly, Plenary Meetings*, p. 466.

they suggest, such interested parties would be able to prevent unanimity, obstruct action, and in effect become judges in their own case.¹¹

Exactly the opposite opinion is held by an eminent British jurist, Sir John Fischer Williams, K.C., British legal representative on the Reparation Commission.¹² He states that it is "startling" to be told that "on a matter of such grave international importance . . . the Assembly of the League can take by a bare majority a decision which involves the responsibility of the League as a body corporate, and which though it does not impose an obligation to reconsider much less to revise a treaty, pits the credit and authority of the League against the maintenance of the instrument attacked."

The principle virtue of Article XIX seems to be that through it, regardless of whether action may finally be taken by unanimous or by majority vote, the Assembly is able to focus world opinion on conditions which threaten to disturb the peace. Sooner or later, therefore, Germany may ask the Assembly to reconsider portions of the Treaty of Versailles to which it objects.

At the March meeting of the League Council in 1929 Dr. Stresemann declared, "Frankly, I do not think that we have in the present century established a condition of affairs which is eternal, and that idea is very clearly expressed in the Covenant of the League of Nations."

What are the specific objections of Germany to the peace settlement? What are the German aims hitherto most frequently expressed? The most important points on which Germany is working for revision may be listed as follows: the imputation of war guilt, reparation, the Rhineland occupation, the Eastern frontiers, the prohibition of an Austro-German union, the unilateral disarmament of Germany, the colonial settlement which deprived the Reich of its colonies and placed on Germans the stigma of maladministration of their overseas possessions, the Saar, and Eupen and Malmedy. Inasmuch as several of these subjects have been discussed in previous issues of the *Information Service*,¹³ the present report will confine itself to the questions of war guilt, Austro-German union, the Saar, Eupen and Malmedy, the colonial settlement and the Eastern frontiers.

WAR RESPONSIBILITY

The provision of the Treaty of Versailles which has probably caused the most objection in Germany is Article 231 imposing upon Germany and its allies the responsibility for the war. This article reads as follows:

"The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies."

11. Cf. Schücking and Wehberg, *Die Satzung des Völkerbundes* (1924 ed.).

12. Cf. Williams, J. F., "The League of Nations and Unanimity," *The American Journal of International Law*, July 1925, Vol. 19, No. 3, p. 482.

13. "The Financial Liquidation of the War," Vol. IV, No. 21, December 21, 1928; "The Evacuation of the Rhineland," Vol. V, No. 1, March 20, 1929; "German-Polish Relations, Danzig, the Polish 'Corridor' East Prussia, Upper Silesia," Vol. III, No. 12, August 17, 1927; "The Problem of an Austro-German Union," Vol. III, No. 20, December 9, 1927; "The Disarmament Deadlock," Vol. IV, No. 19, November 23, 1928.

Austria and Hungary were required to endorse identical articles in the Treaties of St. Germain and Trianon respectively.¹⁴

"The impossible demands of the Versailles Treaty such as . . . the unilateral disarmament of the Reich, the completely superfluous occupation of the Rhineland, the maintenance of the impossible Eastern frontiers, and the prohibition of the Union of Germany and Austria are on every occasion justified by the idea of war guilt."¹⁵

This statement suggests briefly the force of German dissatisfaction with the peace settlement in relation to the question of war responsibility.

The responsibility for the war was laid at Germany's door by the victorious Allies, both at the Peace Conference itself and by

14. Treaty of St. Germain, Article 177; Treaty of Trianon, Article 161.

15. Von Wegerer, Alfred, *Die Widerlegung der Versailler Kriegsschuldthese*, p. 9.

public opinion in Allied countries during the war and for some time thereafter. Not only do the German people feel that their honor has been unjustly stigmatized, but also that the revision of what they regard as an unfair and unwarrantable peace settlement depends primarily on the revision of the judgment contained in Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty. This viewpoint was aptly summarized in a passage appearing in the Paris *Figaro* of July 17, 1928 which we quote: "And, in effect, if Germany is not guilty, the peace is unjust. It is unjust even if the responsibility is divided."¹⁶ While aptly putting the German view in regard to revision of the peace settlement, this quotation by implication expresses also the official French view, which is the converse—viz., that Germany was responsible for the war and that therefore the peace settlement is a just one.

DEVELOPMENT OF WAR-GUILT CONTROVERSY

Discussion of war responsibility has gone through three phases since 1914. First, during the war and the Peace Conference, the "guilt" or responsibility was fixed on a few individuals, such as the Kaiser, the so-called Pan-Germans, and the Austrian and German militarists. The various "white," "blue," "orange," "grey" and "yellow" books published by the belligerent governments soon after July 1914 aimed to provide a documentary basis to support or controvert this judgment. Discussion of the problem during this period was influenced, however, by propaganda and national prejudices. The second phase was marked by the publication of many documents from the German, Austrian and Russian archives, and latterly from the British Foreign Office, which shed a new light on the war's "immediate" causes so called. This phase also saw a swing of the pendulum, on the part of some writers, from the one extreme of fixing the whole guilt on the Central Powers to the other extreme of fastening the guilt on various Entente leaders, resulting in a demand for revision of the Versailles Treaty. It might be said that at the present time, ten years and more after the Armistice, a third phase

of the discussion has begun, in which historians, basing their conclusions on the great mass of documentary evidence now available, are beginning to assert that all the powers were more or less responsible for the outbreak of war. The present tendency thus appears to be toward a theory that war was caused by the "system of international anarchy involved in alliances, armaments, and secret diplomacy." The publication in the autumn of 1928 of Professor Sidney Bradshaw Fay's dispassionate and thoroughly documented work, *The Origins of the World War*, might be said to have inaugurated this third phase of the discussion.

PUBLICATION OF WAR DOCUMENTS

In December 1919 the German Republic published the *Kautsky Documents*—so called because they were edited by Karl Kautsky, the Socialist leader. These formed a carefully arranged and annotated collection of all the Foreign Office documents which might throw light on the origins of the war.

The German Reich has more recently published very completely the documents of the Imperial Foreign Office for the period 1871-1914 in *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871-1914*, a collection of forty volumes in fifty-four parts. A four-volume edition containing selections from the most important of these documents was published in 1928 under the title of *Die Auswärtige Politik des Deutschen Reiches, 1871-1914*.¹⁷ It is interesting to note that the *German White Book* of 1914 contained only twenty-seven documents; the Kautsky collection, covering the same period, comprises 1,123. As we have noted, the *Grosse Politik* series consists of forty volumes. It contains the most secret instructions sent by Bismarck and his successors to German representatives abroad, exchanges between the Kaiser and his Foreign Office and the illuminating marginal notes on many documents made by Bismarck and William II. These documents throw a flood of light on the entire period between the Franco-Prussian War and the World War.

16. *Et, en effet, si l'Allemagne n'est pas coupable, la paix est injuste. Elle l'est même si les responsabilités sont partagées.*

17. An English translation by E. T. S. Dugdale of the documents relating especially to England has been in course of publication (London, Methuen).

Germany is not the only European country which has been engaged in publishing documents of this nature. The Austrian archives have also been opened and a new *Austrian Red Book* has been published in three volumes containing 352 documents—in contrast to the sixty-nine documents of the original *Austrian Red Book* of 1914.

In Russia, as early as the winter of 1917-1918, the Bolsheviks published a series of secret treaties of the former Tsarist Government. In 1922 they published a series of documents entitled *Materials for the History of Franco-Russian Relations from 1910 to 1914*. Other documents have been published by Moscow, comprising according to Fay "more than 200 telegrams instead of the misleading and partly falsified 79 documents of the *Russian Orange Book* of 1914."

BRITISH AND FRENCH DOCUMENTS

The British Government has also issued what Professor Fay has characterized as "an admirable collection of all its diplomatic documents relating to the July crisis of 1914,"¹⁸ which has been followed by five other volumes of the series (Volumes I, II, III, IV, and V) dealing with the period beginning with 1898. The rest of the series is at present being prepared for publication and the whole will form a British record comparable to that of the German *Grosse Politik*.

It has only recently been announced that the French archives are to be opened and that a compilation in some fifty volumes covering the period from 1871 to 1914 will be published. This will fill a large gap in the existing source material.¹⁹

In addition to these official publications, there has been a perfect flood of memoirs, recollections and apologias from leading statesmen and military leaders in all the belligerent countries. But despite the new light thrown on the question by documents and by the work of historians, the legal verdict of Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty still stands. This verdict is based on the report to the Peace Conference of a

"Commission on the Responsibility of the Authors of the War." The report stated that "the war was premeditated by the Central Powers. . . . Germany, in agreement with Austria-Hungary, deliberately worked to defeat all the many conciliatory proposals made by the Entente Powers."

GERMAN PRONOUNCEMENTS RE "WAR GUILT"

For the purpose of revising this verdict the Reich has maintained a Division of War Guilt in the German Foreign Office. A monthly magazine called *Die Kriegsschulfrage* (The Question of War Guilt) is published in Berlin by the Central Bureau for Investigating Responsibility for the War, which collects all the material on the subject of war responsibility, conducts extensive researches into the problem and publishes occasional books.

The German Government has referred to war responsibility many times since the Reich delegation, which went to Versailles to receive the peace terms, denied that the German people were "alone" guilty of causing the war. When the German Reichstag passed legislation putting the Dawes Plan into effect, the Nationalists consented to the passage of the bills only on certain conditions, one of which was the issuing of an official statement repudiating Germany's "war guilt." The Chancellor, Dr. Marx, accordingly read a detailed statement in the Reichstag on August 29, 1924, affirming that the declaration imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles "under the pressure of overwhelming force that Germany caused the outbreak of the World War by her aggression is contrary to historical fact. The government of the Reich does not accept that declaration. . . . So long as a member of the community of nations is branded as a criminal to humanity, a real understanding and reconciliation between the peoples is impossible of realization. . . ."²⁰

The question of war responsibility was again raised by Germany during the pre-Locarno negotiations. A memorandum of September 29, 1924 from the German Government to the States Members of the

18. Gooch, G. P. and Temperley, H. W. V., *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914*, Vol. XI.

19. Cf. "La France ouvre ses archives," *L'Europe Nouvelle*, March 9, 1929.

20. Toynbee, A. J., *Survey of International Affairs, 1925*, Vol. II, p. 12.

League Council concerning the admission of Germany to the League contained a statement to the effect that Germany's declaration to observe her international obligations did not "imply an admission by the German Government of those assertions on which Germany's obligations are based and which lay a moral responsibility upon the German people."²¹ This was, of course, a reference to Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty: The German note of September 26, 1925 addressed to the various Allied governments, accepting the invitation to the Locarno Conference, was accompanied by an *aide-mémoire* which, among other things, recalled the declarations of August 29 and September 29, 1924 and reiterated that Germany's entrance into the League of Nations did not imply admission of "war guilt."²²

Since Germany's entrance into the League, speeches have been made which have kept

the question before the attention of the public. At the end of the 1926 Assembly, during which the Reich was admitted, Foreign Minister Stresemann startled Geneva and the press of the world by a speech to a group of students in which he interpreted Germany's unanimous election to the League as an indication that world public opinion no longer held the Reich responsible for beginning the war. On September 18, 1927, moreover, President von Hindenburg made the following statement at the dedication of the Tannenberg War Memorial: "The charge that Germany is guilty of the greatest of all wars, we, the German people, repudiate in all its phases—war was a last resort for us. . . . Germany is ever ready to prove it before impartial judges."

This utterance remains as a fair statement of the German point of view on war responsibility.

GERMANY LOOKS WESTWARD AND SOUTHEASTWARD

The Treaty of Versailles and the Treaty of St. Germain prohibit the union of Austria and Germany except on condition of the unanimous consent of the Council of the League of Nations. The background of this question has been discussed in a former report on "The Problem of an Austro-German Union."²³

Since 1925, the *Anschluss* question—i. e., the proposal for an Austro-German union—has been increasingly discussed. That it attracted less attention before 1925 was probably due in part to preoccupation with the unfortunate economic situation in both Austria and Germany. The formation in 1925 of the *Deutsch-Oesterreiche Arbeitsgemeinschaft* and the *Deutsch-Oesterreicher Volksbund*—organizations devoted to propaganda on behalf of the *Anschluss*—seems to have given a fresh impetus to the movement. The financial control of the League of Nations was removed from Austria on June 30, 1927 and this may also have served to strengthen the *Anschluss* movement even more recently.

In Germany there are certain political parties which, theoretically at least, are in favor of the *Anschluss*—notably the Social

Democratic party, the Catholic Center party, the Bavarian People's party, and the Nationalist People's party. Not all of them, however, are enthusiastic, since the addition of a large body of Austrian Catholic and Socialist voters to the German Center and Social Democratic parties would greatly upset the present political balance in the Reich—and the Catholics and Socialists are the two most important groups in Austria. Thus the Nationalist People's party may be said perhaps to do only lip service to the idea of *Anschluss*. That they do so at all is doubtless due in part to the very fact that it is forbidden—a circumstance which increases its desirability.

In Austria, the so-called Pan-German party and the Social Democratic party are pro-*Anschluss*. The Christian Socialists, for the present at least, are rather noncommittal on the subject, since they realize the serious external complications which the proposed change would involve. Furthermore, the easy-going Austrians dislike their sterner north German cousins and fear that their beloved Vienna would be completely submerged under the domination of Prussian

21. For the text of this memorandum cf. League of Nations, *Monthly Summary*, December 1924, p. 290-291.

22. Toynbee, *op. cit.*, 1925, Vol. II, p. 47.

23. Foreign Policy Association, *Information Service*, Vol. III, No. 20, December 9, 1927.

Berlin. On the other hand, the precarious economic situation of post-war Austria has caused a certain deficiency in the Austrian will to survive as an independent State, especially since *Anschluss* with the Reich appears to be a solution of existing economic difficulties.

In July 1928 the Schubert music festival in Vienna, attended as it was by many thousands of Reich Germans, was made the occasion of a great popular demonstration in favor of *Anschluss*. Incidents connected with the festival caused a great furor in the French and Czech press, and vigorous protests. On November 12, 1928—the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Austrian Republic—the *Deutsch-Oesterreicher Volksbund* issued a manifesto which declared in part: "German-Austria is a component part of the German Republic."²⁴ Today, ten years after the twelfth of November and forever after we adhere faithfully to this decision and confirm it with our signatures."²⁵ The declaration was signed by the Austrian ex-Chancellors Ramek (of the Christian Socialist party) and Renner (Socialist), and by the Socialist Mayor Seitz of Vienna and the mayors of other cities, as well as by other representative persons.

Outside of Germany and Austria, official feeling against the *Anschluss* plan is strong. France and Czechoslovakia are particularly against it, France because it fears that its security would be menaced by an enlarged Germany, and Czechoslovakia because of its geographical position and its large German minority. Italy, too, is against the plan, since it would cause the Italian and German frontiers to be contiguous at the Brenner Pass. The French press and Czech press in particular are filled with news items, editorials and articles on the subject, and in fact one gathers the impression from a comparison of the German and Austrian press with that of France and Czechoslovakia that the latter's interest in the *Anschluss* proposal is deeper than that of the former.

On December 4, 1928, during a debate in the French Chamber of Deputies on the

budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the *Anschluss* question was raised by a deputy, M. François Albert. He spoke of the grave menace of the *Anschluss*, asserting that in Germany almost all the factors of political and psychological action are working for it. In Austria, also, he stated, there were many partisans of *Anschluss* and even if the question were not raised officially at present, M. Albert was convinced that it would come up sooner or later. His fear was that some day "when Europe is absent-minded or occupied elsewhere, Austria might proclaim her adhesion to Germany."²⁶

M. Briand dealt with the fears of M. Albert in a subsequent speech on the general foreign policy of France and said that he did not regard the arguments as very convincing. Austria could not give up its independence except with the consent of the League Council, and to place a *fait accompli* before the world would be a grave act. "You often hear invoked," said M. Briand, "the formula of the rights of minorities. If in a given State nine-tenths of the population wanted to commit political suicide by wiping their country off the map, and if there remained only one-tenth who were so strongly attached to their country as to be opposed to its disappearance, I say that this minority would have the right to be respected and the right to have its desire of existing as a nation complied with. It would be an inadmissible and really odious act to impose upon it brutally, by the will of the majority, the disappearance of its country."

THE SAAR BASIN

The Saar Basin, a territory of about 700 square miles, with a German population of 650,000, was not detached outright from Germany. Instead, after a heated controversy at the Peace Conference, it was temporarily taken from Germany and turned over to a League of Nations commission which administers the territory. The Saar is rich in coal, and in order to compensate France for the destruction of the mines in the north of France and as part payment on reparation, the Saar mines were placed

24. Article 2 of the Austrian Constitution, adopted unanimously by the German-Austrian National Assembly on November 12, 1918.

25. Quoted in *The European Economic and Political Survey*, November 30-December 15, 1928, p. 191.

26. *European Economic and Political Survey*, November 30-December 15, 1928, p. 192-193; *Le Temps*, December 5 and 6, 1928.

in French hands. In 1935 a plebiscite is to be held to determine whether the people of the Saar wish to be annexed to France, to remain under League administration or to be reunited with Germany. If the last of these alternatives is chosen, Germany will have to repurchase the mines.

For some years after the war, France attempted to dominate the Saar and to pave the way for a plebiscite favorable to itself in 1935. The Germans, meanwhile, believed that the Saar régime was merely disguised annexation and in consequence of the feeling engendered by this situation, the League Council was called upon to settle many disputes over Saar problems. More recently conditions seem to have improved; nevertheless the reunion of the Saar with Germany before 1935 is one of the things much wished for in the Reich.

EUPEN AND MALMEDY

The two enclaves of Eupen and Malmedy, situated on the Belgian-German frontier just

south of Aix-la-Chapelle, are another source of irritation. The peace treaty forced Germany to cede these territories to Belgium, subject to demilitarization and to a plebiscite. Germany protested to the League of Nations that the plebiscite was unfairly conducted, but the League Council confirmed the Belgian title to the territory. Observers in the Reich have not ceased to complain about Belgium's treatment of Germans in Eupen and Malmedy, the chief grievance being, it seems, the lack of German-speaking officials in the local courts and the local administration.

During 1926 and 1927 negotiations were carried on between Belgium and Germany looking towards the buying back of Eupen and Malmedy by Germany. The plan seems to have found considerable support in Belgium, but M. Poincaré intervened, apparently on the ground that any alteration of Germany's western frontiers would be a dangerous precedent, and the plan came to nothing.²⁷

THE GERMAN DEMAND FOR COLONIES

The Treaty of Versailles deprived Germany of all its colonial possessions, the territory thus detached being divided up among the principal Allied powers, who hold most of it under mandate from the League of Nations. In this manner Germany lost 1,027,000 square miles of territory in Africa, in the South Seas and in the Shantung Peninsula in China—areas with a total population of 14,687,000 and an invested capital estimated at 505,000,000 marks.^{27a} The powers which acquired mandates over former German colonies were Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, France, Belgium and Japan.

In the *Comments by the German Delegation on the Conditions of Peace*,²⁸ the German representatives in Paris in 1919 maintained the thesis that the colonial settlement was in "irreconcilable contradiction" to the fifth of President Wilson's Fourteen Points,

which promised "a free, sincere and absolutely impartial settlement of all colonial aims." The Versailles Treaty, they pointed out, rejected German claims for the retention of colonies "without even giving Germany a chance to put them forward."²⁹ These claims were justified, according to the German view, by (1) the lawful acquisition by Germany of her colonies; (2) economic necessity—i. e., Germany's need of raw materials and markets; (3) Germany's need for territory in which its own surplus population might settle; (4) the right and duty of German people "to cooperate in the joint task which devolves upon civilized mankind . . . of educating the backward races."

When the Allies replied to the German observations, to which reference has just been made, they did so in terms which placed on the Reich the unwelcome stigma of colonial maladministration. They commented on the "cruel method of repression in the German colonial administration, the arbitrary requisition and the various forms of forced labor"

27. Cf. *Manchester Guardian* (Daily), January 29, 1929.

27a. Townsend, M. E., "The Contemporary Colonial Movement in Germany," *Political Science Quarterly*, March 1928, p. 64.

28. *International Conciliation*, No. 143, October 1919.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 1249.

in the former German colonies, and explained the post-war colonial settlement in the following categorical terms: "Germany's dereliction in the sphere of colonial civilization has been revealed too completely to admit of the Allied and Associated Powers consenting to make a second experiment and of their assuming the responsibility of again abandoning thirteen or fourteen millions of natives to a fate from which the war has delivered them."³⁰

THE THEORY OF "COLONIAL GUILT"

As a result of this indictment, which aroused almost as much resentment in Germany as did the war guilt accusation, German colonialists—and many other Germans as well—came to feel that only by the recovery of the colonies could this stain on Germany's national honor be wiped out. "There rests upon the German nation just the same necessity of refuting the ungenerous fiction of 'colonial guilt' as of refuting the charge that it alone must bear the responsibility for the late war," wrote a former colonial administrator who may be regarded as representing a considerable body of public opinion in Germany. "We Germans owe it to ourselves and to our children, we owe it to our position among the nations that these reflections upon our national honor should be refuted before all the world."³¹

Not only psychological factors but also what have been termed politico-economic factors have motivated German claims for the return of the colonies. Germans desire the refutation of the moral stigma of "colonial guilt," but they also wish to recover the political prestige which the possession of colonies entails, and endorse the claim of imperialists in all countries that imperialism is the solution for the mother country's problems of "marketing surplus goods, investing surplus capital, relieving surplus population, providing raw materials and promoting the welfare of the colored races."³² German colonial enthusiasts feel that the Reich is at

30. "Reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to the Observations of the German Delegation on the Conditions of Peace," *International Conciliation*, No. 144, November 1919, p. 1372.

31. Schnée, Dr. Heinrich, *German Colonization Past and Future*, p. 50.

32. Moon, P. T., *Imperialism and World Politics*, p. 526.

the mercy of the powers which possess colonies and that this is a limitation which restricts German economic life. Furthermore, they feel that colonies are especially necessary for Germany if it is to fulfill its obligations under the Dawes Plan.³³

The colonial question has been raised not only unofficially in speeches by well-known Germans but officially by German statesmen, as in September 1926 at the famous Thoiry luncheon of M. Briand and Dr. Stresemann. Moreover, the German Government protested officially, first to the Belgian Government and then to the League Council, when Belgium incorporated Ruanda-Urundi in the Belgian Congo in 1925 for purposes of administration.³⁴ Again, in discussing the question of whether or not to apply for membership in the League, the German Government as one of its conditions decided to ask that Germany be given "in due time" an active share "in the working of the mandates system of the League of Nations."³⁵ While there does not seem to have been any direct acceptance of this condition by the League, in October 1927 a German representative took his seat on the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. Baron Kastl, the German member, served for years in the colonial service, mainly in German Southwest Africa. His appointment was described by the German *Kolonialgesellschaft*, the most important German colonial society, as a "step forward for Germany, certainly, but as no reason for great joy and as still less reason for expectant hopes that Germany would regain her colonies or acquire mandates."³⁶

However, it should be added that Germany's representation on the Mandates Commission has probably done something towards salving the wound caused by the so-called "colonial lie." Moreover, Germany's entry into the League has entitled German nationals to benefit by the open-door provisions in the Class A and B mandates.

33. Cf. p. 140. Also Schacht, Hjalmar, *New Colonial Policy*, a paper read before the Berlin-Charlottenburg branch of the *Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft*, March 24, 1926, p. 7-9.

34. Cf. Buell, R. L., *The Native Problem in Africa*, Vol. II, p. 462-463; also League of Nations, Permanent Mandates Commission, *Minutes of the Seventh Session*, October 1925, p. 53, ff.; also League of Nations, *Monthly Summary*, December 1925, p. 320.

35. League of Nations, *Official Journal*, March 1925, p. 326.

36. *Der Kolonialdeutsche* (organ of the *Kolonialgesellschaft*), September 15, 1927. Quoted in Townsend, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

THE COLONIAL MOVEMENT

The leaders of the colonial movement in Germany are for the most part members of the Right and Center parties, and the People's party, which is dominated by the industrialists. The Nationalists, the People's party and the Democratic party have incorporated statements in regard to colonies in their party programs. The Nationalist program states: "We strive for revision of the Versailles Treaty, the rebuilding of German unity and the reacquisition of colonies which are necessary for our commercial development."³⁷ The People's party program contains the following declaration: "The German People's party will do everything possible to reacquire colonial territory which is necessary for Germany's commercial requirements."³⁸ The Democratic party program states that "Germany's share in the spiritual uplift of mankind warrants her claim to a part in colonial activity. We fight against the theft of our colonies."³⁹

It should be noted that these statements are very general in character and do not specify how Germany should go about getting its colonies back or whether they should be reannexed outright or held under a League mandate. Neither has the Reich Government issued any official *pronunciamiento* on the subject, although it maintains a distinctly watchful attitude, as evidenced by the Ruanda-Urundi affair to which reference has just been made.

An interesting questionnaire entitled "Shall Germany Engage in Colonial Activity?" (*Soll Deutschland Kolonialpolitik treiben?*) was sent out in 1927 by the Hamburg *Institut für Auswärtige Politik*, the results being published in *Europäische Gespräche* for December 1927. The occasion of this inquiry was the appointment of a German member to the Permanent Mandates

Commission of the League. The questionnaire raised three issues: (1) Shall Germany strive for colonies? (2) Shall it strive for them in the form of mandates? (3) Shall it limit its colonial activity to demanding equal rights with other nations in all colonial territories as well as in mandated territories? The questionnaire was sent to 200 Germans prominent in public life. Only fifty replied. The answers were almost evenly divided between affirmative and negative in regard to entering on any colonial activity. The affirmative answers, for the most part, endorsed the suggestion that mandated territories should be sought after as the best course of procedure which existing circumstances admitted. Many of the replies stressed the point that Germany must be cleared of the so-called "colonial lie"—i. e., of the stigma of maladministration of its former colonies.

THE SOCIALIST VIEWPOINT

One of the most interesting of the replies was sent by Dr. Hermann Müller, who has since been made Chancellor of the Reich. Dr. Müller expressed the Socialist viewpoint that in spite of the unwarranted "colonial lie," Germany should not strive for colonial possessions, either under mandate or by direct annexation. He based his contention on the fact that German industry at home was greatly in need of capital and that colonial activity would intensify the money stringency. He expressed himself as favoring the open door in the mandated territories but stated that Germany's real task on the Mandates Commission was to watch over the welfare of the native peoples. The significance of Dr. Müller's statement lies in the fact that it represents a very considerable section of public opinion which does not endorse the claims made by the leaders of the German colonial movement.

GERMANY'S EASTERN FRONTIERS

The peace settlement has left Germany in a state of dissatisfaction with respect to three regions along its Eastern frontier—viz., East Prussia, Danzig, the so-called

37. *Politischer Almanach*, 1925, p. 235-236.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 252.

"Polish Corridor" and Upper Silesia. By the Versailles Treaty, Poland received territory which had formerly comprised the greater part of the Prussian provinces of Posen and West Prussia, stretching from the boundary of Upper Silesia northward for about 260 miles to the Baltic coast, and in-

terposing a barrier with an average breadth of 80 miles between East Prussia and the rest of Germany. The total population of this territory was just under 3,000,000, of which a number just under 1,850,000 was reckoned to be Polish. Moreover, the partition of Upper Silesia under the terms of the Versailles Treaty added 500,400 voters to Poland, of whom approximately 218,400 were German.⁴⁰

It had originally been intended by the Allied and Associated Powers that the whole province of Upper Silesia should be ceded to Poland and the original draft of the treaty as presented to the German delegation at Paris made such a provision. But the German delegation protested vigorously against the cession of this territory.⁴¹ And as a result, the Versailles Treaty, as finally drafted, provided for a plebiscite to determine the disposition of this rich industrial area. It is interesting to note that this change in the treaty was the only important one which resulted from German protests.

UPPER SILESIAN BOUNDARY

The final delimitation of the Upper Silesian boundary in October 1921 by the League Council raised a storm of protest in Germany, which maintained that the result of the plebiscite warranted the Reich's retention of the entire province, especially since the latter formed an economic unit.⁴²

The loss of territory in the east has never been accepted as a permanent settlement by the German people. Throughout the entire decade since the conclusion of the treaty this fact has disturbed German-Polish relations and has been an irritant in the general international situation in Europe. The relations between the Free City of Danzig and Poland, also, have been the cause of a number of appeals to the League Council and, while Germany has no sovereign interest in Danzig, the fact that the city is 95 per cent

40. For a detailed account of the Versailles settlement in regard to Germany's eastern frontiers and a discussion of the problems of Danzig, the "Polish Corridor," East Prussia and Upper Silesia, cf. "German-Polish Relations," F. P. A. Information Service, Vol. III, No. 12, August 17, 1927.

41. Cf. "Comments by the German Delegation on the Conditions of Peace," *International Conciliation*, No. 143, October 1919.

42. In the plebiscite 707,605 votes were polled for Germany and 479,359 votes for Poland. Cf. Temperley, *History of the Peace Conference*, Vol. VI, p. 620.

German—even according to Polish estimates—has not served to lessen bad feeling between Poland and the Reich. The vexed problems of the free right of settlement for Germans in Poland, the expropriation of German property in Poland and the treatment of the German minority in Poland have agitated both countries, and the League and the Permanent Court of International Justice have been called upon many times to effect settlements of various points at issue. Furthermore, a tariff war between the two countries has been going on since 1925, which prolonged negotiations between competent delegations in Warsaw and Berlin have not yet brought to an end. Trade between the two countries in consequence has suffered greatly and Polish-German political relations have been embittered.

MINORITY PROBLEMS IN POLAND

Recently the German minority problem in Poland has once more been brought to the attention of the world by the action of Dr. Stresemann at the Lugano meeting of the League Council. On December 15, in reply to a speech of the Polish Foreign Minister, M. Zaleski, Dr. Stresemann declared that he would ask that the entire minorities question be placed on the agenda of the following meeting of the Council (March 1929) in order to give that difficult subject a thorough airing.

The speech of M. Zaleski to which Dr. Stresemann replied in this manner had been one of fiery denunciation. It was called forth by the action of the Council in considering ten petitions concerning German minority schools in Polish Upper Silesia, presented to it by the *Deutscher Volksbund* (the minorities office in Upper Silesia).⁴³ After the Council had acted on the suggestions of its rapporteur, M. Adatci of Japan, M. Zaleski attacked the *Volksbund* for

43. The German-Polish Convention relative to Upper Silesia (May 15, 1922) provided in Article 148 that the Polish and German Governments should each establish a minorities office to safeguard the interests of minorities in Upper Silesia. The *Deutscher Volksbund* is the German minorities office in Polish Upper Silesia established in accordance with the convention. The text of the article is as follows: "Afin d'assurer aux pétitions émanant de personnes appartenant à une minorité, qui ont trait à l'interprétation ou à l'application de dispositions de la présente partie, un traitement uniforme et équitable de la part des autorités administratives dans chacune des deux parties du territoire plébiscité, les deux Gouvernements institueront, chacun dans sa partie du territoire plébiscité, un Office des minorités."

"carrying on propaganda against the Polish State . . . [and] endeavoring by illegal methods to win over partisans, even among the Polish inhabitants." The Polish Foreign Minister further accused some of the members of the *Volksbund* of high treason against Poland. "The minorities treaties," said M. Zaleski, "and the provisions of the Geneva Convention relating to the protection of minorities were established with a view to affording the minorities equitable treatment by the authorities and the free enjoyment of their rights. If, however, these provisions can be used as a legal basis for the activities of a minority association, whose objects are directed against the State, the situation must become absolutely intolerable for the State. The activity conducted methodically and perseveringly by the *Volksbund* not only seeks to sap the authority of the Polish Government in the territory of Polish Upper Silesia, but is calculated, if tolerated, to become a real danger to peace."⁴⁴

THE LEAGUE INVOKED

Before the Council met in March 1929 an incident occurred in Polish Upper Silesia which brought the minority question even more forcibly before public attention. On February 13, 1929, M. Ulitz, the director of the *Deutscher Volksbund*, was put in jail by the Polish authorities in Kattowitz on a charge of high treason in aiding a young man to escape from Polish military service. M. Ulitz was a deputy in the Polish Upper Silesian Sejm and therefore enjoyed Parliamentary immunity as long as the Sejm was in session. The Sejm had been suddenly dissolved by decree, however, on the day before the arrest. The Germans charged that dissolution was ordered to make possible the arrest of M. Ulitz. They asserted, furthermore, that the documents on the basis of which he was charged with high treason had been forged by a spy. The Poles claimed, for their part, that the mandate of the Sejm had expired and that the arrest of M. Ulitz had had nothing to do with its dissolution.

The *Volksbund* at once telegraphed a petition to the Secretary-General of the League

(February 14), asking that the affair be brought to the attention of the Council. It claimed that the arrest was intended as an attack upon the German minority. The Polish Government informed the Council, however, that M. Ulitz had been imprisoned under the penal code on the charge of violating the military laws. It declared that as long as the case was in the hands of the judicial authorities there could be no possibility of intervening in the course of justice. The Council, when it met, took note of this information and expressed the hope that the judicial authorities "would do all in their power to hasten the proceedings."⁴⁵

The question of League guarantees of existing provisions for protection of minorities in general was also brought up at the March meeting of the Council, in accordance with the announcement Dr. Stresemann had made at the December Council meeting. After a rather lengthy debate the Council appointed a Committee of Three to report on proposals to change the procedure in regard to the protection of minorities.⁴⁶

Polish-German relations were not improved, meanwhile, by the publication on January 15, 1929 in the English *Review of Reviews* of a confidential memorandum to the German Government written by General Groener, German Minister of Defense. This memorandum urged, among other things, the necessity of building German cruisers to protect the Baltic coast against Poland. It envisaged Germany as faced by territorial "robbery" and stated specifically that Poland constituted a danger to Germany. It expressed the view, in fact, that Poland was already preparing a jumping-off place from which to pounce upon German territory. An answer to this memorandum, written by the Polish Foreign Minister, M. Zaleski, was soon afterward published in the *Review of Reviews* (February 15, 1929). M. Zaleski denied that any Polish government, party or group had harbored aggressive designs against Germany and stated that Poland stood ready to conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany which should guarantee

45. League of Nations, *Council Minutes* (54th Session of the Council), Seventh Meeting, p. 7.

46. This general question cannot be dealt with in the present report but may be discussed in a subsequent issue of the *Information Service*.

44. League of Nations, *Official Journal*, January 1929, p. 53.

the territorial integrity of both States.

The question of guaranteeing the Polish-German frontier is one which has long agitated European international relations. It was one of the most vexed problems during the Locarno negotiations in 1925. It will be recalled that while Germany entered into an arbitration treaty with Poland and also with Czechoslovakia, the Locarno guarantee pact in which Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy guaranteed "the maintenance of the territorial *status quo*" applied only to the Rhineland and not to the Polish frontier.⁴⁷

The German official view with respect to guaranteeing the permanence of the Eastern frontiers was given by Dr. Stresemann in the *Reichsrat* on March 10, 1925. He stated that Germany had not offered to conclude an eastern guarantee pact. His explanation was as follows:

"Germany has not the power to force through an alteration of her frontiers, nor the desire to do so. Since, however, Article XIX of the Covenant of the League expressly states that treaties which may have become inapplicable can be altered, no one can expect Germany finally to renounce taking peaceful advantage for herself of this opening for future developments."

In a statement to the House of Commons, Sir Austen Chamberlain declared that in extending a guarantee to the Rhineland only,

the signatories to the Locarno pact were not licensing or legitimizing war elsewhere. They rather held, he said, that by the mere fact of stabilizing peace in the West an additional guarantee would be given to the frontiers of the East.⁴⁸

Not everyone has shared Sir Austen Chamberlain's optimism, however. Professor Madariaga states, for instance, that in his opinion the failure to guarantee the Eastern frontier "was bound to result in disastrous moral effects. The first was general and diffuse weakening of the Covenant guarantees; the second an encouragement to those who feel that the Eastern European settlement is too precarious."⁴⁹

In consequence of Germany's action in ratifying the Locarno pact it may be said that the Reich has decided to regard as irrevocable the cession of Alsace-Lorraine to France. But it is equally plain that although Germany renounced war as an instrument for securing an alteration of its eastern frontiers when it signed compulsory arbitration treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia at Locarno, it is still very far from having relinquished the hope of securing a peaceful revision of the Eastern frontier. It still relies in this respect upon the possibilities latent in Article XIX of the League Covenant.

47. "The Anti-War Pact," F. P. A. Information Service, Vol. IV, No. 18, p. 359.

48. Great Britain, *House of Commons Debates*, New Series, Vol. 182, col. 316 ff.

49. Madariaga, S. de, *Disarmament*, p. 149.

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